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Letter No. 2366

June 9, 1988

WINTER WHEAT
PRODUCTION

The winter wheat production is forecast at 1 billion 570 million bushels, up slightly from 1987, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Crop Production report of June 9. The yields are now expected to average 39.4 bushels per acre, down 0.4 bushels from last year. This production forecast is subject to change due to growing conditions that may affect the crop after June 1.

HAY FROM FmHA
INVENTORY

The hay standing on farms held in inventory by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farmers Home Administration will be sold to help meet livestock needs in drought-stricken states. Vance L. Clark, FmHA Administrator, instructed state directors to sell at reasonable cost hay on inventory property in counties where the state ASCS committees have authorized the release of set-aside acres for haying and grazing. Sales will be by sealed bid. As of June 8, set-aside acres had been released for haying and grazing in 449 counties in 12 states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, N. Dakota, Ohio, S. Dakota, Texas and Wisconsin. FmHA holds a total of 1,483 unleased farms in the 12 states, but hay will be sold only on farms located in counties where set-aside acres have been released.

SOVIET CROP
ESTIMATE

The estimate of the 1988 Soviet grain crop remains unchanged at 215 million tons, including 92 million wheat, 109 million coarse grains and 14 million miscellaneous grains and pulses.

USSR GRAIN
IMPORTS
UNCHANGED

Grain imports by the USSR for 1988-89 are estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 26 million tons, unchanged from a month ago. Imports at this level would be the smallest in nearly a decade. The prospects for a large 1988 wheat crop and the likelihood that the quality of the wheat crop will be significantly higher than a year ago are expected to sharply reduce wheat imports. The level of USSR feed wheat imports in 1988-89 will depend on the size of their coarse grain crop and the availability of feed quality wheat in the international market. USSR coarse grain imports are expected to hold at around 10 million tons.

GLOBAL WHEAT
PRODUCTION

The global 1988-89 wheat production is up slightly from last month, as larger foreign production more than offsets a reduced U.S. winter wheat crop. The U.S. winter wheat production forecast was reduced 50 mil. bushels from last month because of reduced yield prospects, especially in Kansas. However, the crop about equals the 1987 production.

INTERIM RULE
ON FARM PROGRAM
PAYOUT

A husband and wife engaged in farming will be considered "separate persons" with respect to the maximum program payment limitation provisions for the 1988 crop year, if each maintained separate farming operations before and after their marriage, according to Sec'y of Agriculture Richard Lyng. In order to comply with a U.S. District Court order, all 1988 crop payments will be conditionally issued without regard to the marital status of an individual. In the event that the District Court order is overturned, all additional payments that were made will have to be refunded to the USDA, together with the interest. For more information, contact the local county ASCS office through July 8.

INCREASED FEES
FOR DAIRY
PRODUCT GRADING
AND INSPECTION

Effective June 19, the U.S. Department of Agriculture will increase fees for its voluntary--that is, industry-solicited--dairy product grading and inspection service. The last fee raise was in November 1977, and rising operating costs are prompting this increase. Details are in the June 3 Federal Register. Copies may be obtained from the Dairy Grading Section, Dairy Division, AMS, USDA, Rm. 2750-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456.

CONS. RESERVE
REDUCING
EROSION

The Conservation Reserve Program is reducing erosion on farmland by over a half billion tons of soil a year, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The figures indicate CRP is reducing annual soil erosion on the nation's cultivated cropland by 17 percent. The average erosion rate on CRP's 25½ million acres of land, contracted through six sign-ups, will drop from 22 to 1.6 tons an acre when placed in grass or trees. The next CRP sign-up will be July 18-Aug. 5, 1988.

7 MEN &
AN APHID

Seven Federal scientists are ganging up against the newly imported wheat aphid, a new import from Russia. About \$800,000 has been allocated for the 1988 research. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the new aphid did \$36 million worth of damage to wheat, barley, oats and rye last year. Carried on the wind, the pest scourges crop fields, spreading disease and injecting toxin into leaves as it feeds. It was first detected in the Texas Panhandle in 1986, and has since spread to Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, S. Dakota, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. Some 60 million acres of crops are considered susceptible to the aphid's attack.

SUBSIDIES IN
COSTA RICA

Costa Rica has begun subsidizing credit to ranchers who buy beef and dual-purpose cattle--that's cattle used for beef or milk. This move is in response to the continued decline of Costa Rica's ability to produce enough beef to maintain normal exports to the U.S. and adequately supply its domestic market. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, this will likely provide U.S. cattle exporters with an opportunity to increase sales to Costa Rica. A total that amounts to 10 million 800 thousand U.S. dollars will be lent under this program.

BIOTECH
MEETING

The first guidelines concerning the environmental and health safety of agricultural biotechnology research will be the main topic at the next meeting of the Agriculture Biotechnology Research Advisory Committee at the U.S. Department of Agriculture on June 23-24. These guidelines will address USDA-funded research experiments that use biotechnology in outdoor field trials. When revised, the guidelines will be published as a proposal in the Federal Register for public comment.

SALES TO
JAPAN

Private exporters reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture on June 6 and 8 export sales of 267,208 metric tons of corn for delivery to Japan. Of the total, 137,160 tons is for delivery during the 1987-88 marketing year and 130,048 tons is for delivery during 1988-89.

FROM OUR RADIO

AGRICULTURE USA #1619...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) The evidence continues to pile up that the earth is becoming a giant greenhouse and is beginning to undergo a severe climate change. A change for the warmer. Gary Crawford talks with experts in the field of agriculture and climatology about what a global warming trend might mean for farmers and food production.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1607...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; A city/farm high school; U.S. beef promotion in Japan; Egg producers see smaller returns; Drought assistance.

CONSUMER TIME #1099...(Weekly reel of 2½-3 min features) Low egg prices; Agriculture seeping into U.S. classrooms; Lamb--A yuppie food?; Microwave myths; Jobs for seniors.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Wed, June 15, Ag. resources outlook; Thurs, June 16, Sugar and sweeteners situation, Milk production; Fri, June 17, Cattle on feed, Agricultural outlook report; Mon, June 20, U.S. tobacco outlook, Catfish production; Tues, June 21, Crop/weather update, Rice outlook; Farm spending for '87; Wed, June 22, Cherry production; Thurs, June 23, World tobacco situation, Poultry production, Horticultural products export. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. ET each working day.

TELEVISION SERVICE programs, A BETTER WAY, DOWN TO EARTH, AGRICULTURAL UPDATE and SATELLITE NEWS are available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8 as follows:

Thursdays....AG UPDATE/SATELLITE NEWS, 7:30-7:45 p.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

Saturdays....A BETTER WAY, 10:00-10:30 a.m. ET.....Transponder 9X

ORIGINAL DOWN TO EARTH, 10:30-11:00 a.m. ET....Transponder 9X

UPLINK SATELLITE NEWS/AG UPDATE, 11:00-11:15 a.m. ET.....Transponder 9X

Mondays.....A BETTER WAY, 8:00-8:30 a.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

REPEAT DOWN TO EARTH, 8:30-9:00 a.m. ET....Transponder 12D

UPLINK SATELLITE NEWS/AG UPDATE, 9:00-9:15 a.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

A BETTER WAY is also available on The Learning Channel SATCOM 3R, Transponder 2, Audio 6.8 each Thursday at 10:30 a.m. ET.

OFF MIKE

Don Elder and Vic Powell attended the NAFB Southeast regional meeting in Kissimmee, Fla. on June 3-5. Cindy and Chuck Zimmerman and Gary Cooper of Fla. Agrinet headed the organizational effort that produced an excellent series of events. The weekend highlight was a behind-the-scenes tour of the Land Pavilion at Disney's EPCOT Center focusing on aquaculture, hydroponics and other forms of small-scale intensive agriculture. The annual Jim Graham Barnyard Classic golf tournament was won by Hugh Whaley, Am. Soybean Assoc., with a 75 score. Chief fishperson was former NAFB Pres. Ken Root, who won two trophies: Biggest single fish and most fish caught. Everett Griner, Georgia Agrinews, allowed that his angling style did not disturb the ecological balance of the local fish population. Dr. Martha Rhodes, asst. commissioner, Fla. Dept. of Ag. and Cons. Services, presented Cindy Zimmerman a document

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signed by Fla. Gov. Bob Martinez and his Cabinet members, proclaiming May 29-June 4 as Farm Broadcasters Week. Other events included a barbecue at the Overstreet cattle ranch and a Sunday morning farm tour...The National Corn Growers initiated a radio news service for farm broadcasters this week. Mon-Fri daily feeds and reports will be fed at 10:20 am Eastern Time on SATCOM 1R, Trans. 19, Ch. 16 and Galaxy II, TR-3, Aud. 84.6. For additional info call Chuck Parker at (804) 323-1960 or Larry Rus at (314) 275-9915.

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